

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

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R 140200Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 557

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

CINCPAC

S E C R E T SINGAPORE 2096

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SN

SUBJECT: SINGAPORE REACTION TO ASEAN MEETING

1. SUMMARY: REFLECTING THE OPTIMISTIC PUBLIC ATTITUDE TAKEN BY FOREIGN MINISTER RAJARATNAM (SEE SEPTTEL), MFA PERMSEC BOGAARS EXPRESSED PRIVATELY CONSIDERABLE PLEASURE OVER RESULTS OF THE ASEAN FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING IN JAKARTA. MOST SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL RESULTS WERE SERIOUS CONSIDERATION GIVEN TO WAYS OF ASSISTING LAOS INCLUDING LIKELIHOOD OF INVITING RLG TO JOIN ASEAN IF INTERNAL SITUATION CONTINUES TO BE FAVORABLE AND DECISION TO OPPOSE OUSTER OF LON NOL GOVERNMENT AT FALL SESSION OF UNGA. GOS BELIEVES ASEAN ACCEPTANCE OF UN STUDY TEAM REPORTS ON ECONOMIC COOPERATION REPRESENTS MAJOR STEP FORWARD AND CONSIDERS

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THERE IS REAL CHANCE TO MOVE AHEAD WITH COMPLEMENTARITY

AGREEMENTS, TRADE LIBERALIZATION AND INDUSTRIAL COOPERATION. END SUMMARY.

2. DURING EXTENDED DISCUSSION WITH ME MAY 13 PERMSEC MFA BOGAARS EXPRESSED CONSIDERABLE SATISFACTION OVER POSITIVE RESULTS OF ASEAN FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING IN JAKARTA. HE INDICATED CONSIDERATION OF LAOS AND CAMBODIAN SITUATIONS HAD BEEN PARTICULARLY USEFUL, AND NOTED THAT GOS WAS ESPECIALLY PLEASED THAT SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS HAD BEEN REGISTERED ON ASEAN ECONOMIC FRONT. BOGAARS' ACCOUNT OF FOLLOWING ITEMS WAS OF PARTICULAR INTEREST:

A. LAOS. MOOD OF CAUTIOUS OPTIMISM PREVAILED DURING MINISTERIAL DISCUSSION OF LAOS. CONFEREES PRAISED JOHN DEAN'S ROLE IN FACILITATING RECONCILIATION IN LAOS, AND FELT IT WAS PARTICULARLY SIGNIFICANT THAT HE HAD BEEN TRANSFERRED AS AMBASSADOR TO PHNOM PENH -- POSSIBLY FOR A RELAY. THERE WAS CONSIDERABLE DISCUSSION OF WAYS AND MEANS WHEREBY ASEAN GOVERNMENTS COULD BE HELPFUL TO LAOS INCLUDING POSSIBLE OFFERS OF ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE. MINISTERS HAD CONCLUDED THAT DIRECTION OF EVENTS IN LAOS SHOULD CLARIFY DURING NEXT SIX MONTHS, ADD THAT IF SITUATION STILL FAVORABLE ASEAN SHOULD OFFER FULL MEMBERSHIP TO LAOS WELL BEFORE NEXT FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING.

B. CAMBODIA. I QUESTIONED BOGAARS ON PRECISE MEANING OF SENTENCE IN ASEAN PRESS STATEMENT THAT "THE UN SHOULD NOT TAKE ANY ACTION WHICH MAY PREJUDICE THE DECISION OF THE KHMER PEOPLE THEMSELVES..." BOGAARS REPLIED THAT THIS MEANT VERY SIMPLY THE UN SHOULD NOT OUST THE LON NOL GOVERNMENT AND THAT QUESTION OF REPRESENTATION SHOULD BE LEFT UP TO THE CDNRGDUN PEOPLE. HE SAID ASEAN GOVERNMENTS WOULD DO THEIR BEST TO KEEP CAMBODIAN REPRESENTATION ITEM OFF THE UN AGENDA NEXT FALL AND IF QUESTION OF OUSTING GKR CAME TO A VOTE, ASEAN COUNTRIES WOULD VOTE AGAINST.

C. VIETNAM. MINISTERS EXPRESSED LITTLE OPTIMISM ABOUT THE SITUATION IN EITHER CAMBODIA OR VIETNAM. ALTHOUGH
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THEY DID NOT DISCUSS GVN/PRG REPRESENTATION QUESTION, BOGAARS INDICATED THAT ASEAN NATIONS (WITH POSSIBLE EXCEPTION OF INDONESIA BECAUSE OF THEIR PARTICIPATION ICCS) WOULD VOTE AGAINST ANY MOVE TO OUST THE GVN FROM INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS.

D. LOS. THERE WAS NO COMMON GROUND ON LOS MATTERS. THE PHILS HAD URGED THAT ASEAN TAKE A STAND IN SUPPORT

OF THE ARCHIPELAGO THEORY, BUT INDONESIA POINTED OUT THAT THE INTERESTS OF OTHER ASEAN GOVERNMENTS (SPECIFICALLY THAILAND) WERE DIFFERENT, AND THAT IT WAS THEREFORE BETTER TO WORK OUT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE ASEAN GOVERNMENTS ON A BILATERAL BASIS. MALAYSIANS CONFIRMED TO THE GOS THAT THEIR BILATERAL DISCUSSIONS WITH INDONESIA CONCERNING THE PROBLEM OF TRANSITING INDONESIAN "ARCHIPELAGIC WATERS" LYING BETWEEN WESTERN AND EASTERN MALAYSIA WERE PROCEEDING SATISFACTORILY.

E. ZONE OF PEACE, FREEDOM AND NEUTRALITY. MINISTERS APPROVED SENIOR OFFICIALS COMMITTEE REPORTS ON ZONE WHICH LISTED VARIOUS MEANS OF IMPLEMENTING THE ZONE, INCLUDING A POSSIBLE UN RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING THE ZONE, BILATERAL APPROACHES TO THE MAJOR POWERS TO RECOGNIZE THE ZONE, ETC. BOGAARS SAID MINISTERS FELT PRIORITY SHOULD BE GIVEN TO WORKING OUT DISPUTE SETTLEMENT PROCEDURES TO RESOLVE BILATERAL DISPUTES WITHIN THE ZONE. HE THOUGHT IT UNLIKELY SUCH PROCEDURES WOULD BE SUCCESSFUL IN RESOLVING SUCH A DIFFICULT PROBLEM AS THE PHILIPPINE/MALAYSIAN DISPUTE OVER SABAH. (ALTHOUGH BOGAARS WAS SYMPATHETIC TO MALAYSIA'S POINT OF VIEW, HE EXPRESSED PERSONAL OPINION THAT GOM DID NOT REALLY WANT DISPUTE WITH PHILS OVER SABAH SETTLED AT THIS TIME BECAUSE IT WOULD LEAVE MANILA FREE TO CRUSH MUSLIM REVOLT IN SOUTHERN PHILIPPINES.) HE SAID NO EFFORT WOULD BE MADE TO PRESENT RESOLUTION ON ZONE AT UPCOMING UNGA.

F. ECONOMIC COOPERATION. DECISION OF ASEAN MINISTERS TO ENDORSE A UN ECONOMIC STUDY TEAM REPORT ON POSSIBLE AREAS FOR GREATER ASEAN ECONOMIC COOPERATION REPRESENTED A MAJOR STEP FORWARD. BOGAARS
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THOUGHT THERE WAS A REAL CHANCE TO MOVE AHEAD WITH COMPLEMENTARITY AGREEMENTS, GREATER INDUSTRIAL COOPERATION AND TRADE LIBERALIZATION. HE UNDERSTOOD THAT EFFORTS WOULD BE MADE TO HAVE FINANCE MINISTERS FROM EACH COUNTRY SIT DOWN WITH ASEAN OFFICIALS AND REVIEW POSSIBILITIES.

3. ALTHOUGH BOGAARS WAS VERY POSITIVE ABOUT THE RESULTS OF THE ASEAN MEETING, HE WAS VERY CRITICAL OF THE PHILIPPINE PERFORMANCE WHICH HE BLUNTLY CHARACTERIZED AS "STUPID" AND "IRRITATING." HE CITED PARTICULARLY PHILIPPINE EFFORTS TO PUSH A RESOLUTION ON ARCHIPELAGOES EVEN AFTER THE INDONESIANS HAD MADE IT CLEAR THAT IT WOULD NOT WASH. HE ALSO COMMENTED ON THE DEPTH OF BITTERNESS DISPLAYED PRI-

VATELY BY PHILIPPINE AND MALAYSIAN OFFICIALS CONCERNING GOM/GOP BILATERAL ISSUES-PRINCIPALLY SABAH. HOWEVER, HE THOUGHT THEIR COMMON MEMBERSHIP IN ASEAN WOULD PROBABLY KEEP THIS DISPUTE FROM GETTING OUT OF HAND.
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